

**Governor's Proposed FY23 Budget Adjustments
Appropriations Hearing
HB 5037 AAC the State Budget for the Biennium Ending June 30th, 2023
Department of Social Services
Wednesday, February 23rd, 2022**

Karen Healy

Good afternoon Senator Osten, Representative Walker, and distinguished members of the Appropriations Committee.

My name is Karen Healy and I am a registered voter in Hartford and I'm a member of Keep The Promise Coalition and involved in Disability Rights Connecticut. I spent most of my life institutionalized in Poughkeepsie, New York, and Connecticut Valley Hospital for self-injurious behavior starting in 1989 and was discharged in December 2014.

I am here to testify in regards to the proposed budget adjustments for DSS.

Before COVID, my dentist started working on an implant on one of my front teeth. I want to be able to smile again, but most of the work that I've had done isn't covered by my HUSKY C. I just had a permanent bridge put in and it cost me \$1,756 out of pocket. When all the work is done on my implant it will cost me over \$4,000 out of pocket. It recently cost me over \$365 out for a night guard. Please fund expanding HUSKY's dental coverage so I can afford this work which will allow me to smile again and prevent more expensive problems later on.

In that light I would like to thank Governor Lamont for increasing the HUSKY dental reimbursement rates, but I think

there needs to be more of an increase in order to improve provider participation. There are still not a lot of dentists in Connecticut that take HUSKY.

This budget also does not address the income limits for HUSKY C, which force me to spend down to keep my insurance. I have a lot of medical needs which I need HUSKY C to cover. The income limits make it difficult for me to keep my HUSKY C coverage. Even though I'm also on Medicare, Medicare doesn't cover a lot of what my HUSKY C covers. Please put funding into raising the income limits for HUSKY C so I don't have to worry about whether I can keep my coverage.

I've finally been able to get myself in a good spot mentally, but it still hurts my self-esteem to not be able to smile because my dental expenses are so costly.

I would like to say thank you to the legislators for listening to my testimony and working to improve HUSKY.